

The Circuit Writer



NEWSLETTER OF THE COMMISSION ON ARCHIVES AND HISTORY
Northern New Jersey Conference, The United Methodist Church

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NEW JERSEY PERSPECTIVES ON THE WORLD METHODIST FAMILY

Methodists from around the globe gathered in Honolulu in July 1981 for the centennial session of the World Methodist Conference. Here are personal perspectives of four delegates and visitors from the Northern New Jersey Annual Conference.

The Rev. Ronald W. Cadmus, Program & Development Director, Ocean Grove
Camp Meeting Association

It was an emotional gathering of 3,500 United Methodists from over 90 nations, gathering in Hawaii for the 14th World Methodist Conference. The event marked the 100th Anniversary of the First Conference held in London in 1881. Dr. Kenneth Greet, the General Secretary of the Council, gathered the delegation together at a communion celebration conducted from 20 altars to which the diversity of the church came to be gathered into one, laying the groundwork for the four major themes: ONE WORLD, ONE LORD, ONE MISSION AND ONE HOPE. The official representatives from New Jersey were the Rev. Ronald W. Cadmus of the Ocean Grove Camp Meeting Association, Dr. Alden Welch of the Newton United Methodist Church and Dr. Charles Sayre of Haddonfield, New Jersey. Rejoicing in the oneness of the Methodist family, the conference centered its attention on the secular challenges of our day and Christ's mandate in meeting those needs in responsible mission. The Sheraton Ballroom provided the stage for the Pacific Festival where over 250 representatives of the various cultural influences of Hawaii presented the rich traditions of the cultural and sacred influences of the Islands. A climactic open air program at the Waikiki Shell was preceeded by a massed parade of the World Methodist Council, with National flags processing through the Waikiki business district. At this significant moment, attention was directed upon the effect of the United Methodist Church as all eyes reflected upon the urgent call of Christ to be in Mission to the Eighties.

Drs. Iona and John R. McLaughlin, retired, Gaithersburg, MD.

The program of the Centennial session of the World Methodist Council held in Hawaii in July 1981 gave the delegates a warm appreciation of the meaningful history of the Wesleyan Movement and an exciting look into future possibilities in the Council's second century of existence. For anyone who was present at Oxford in 1951 (the first meeting after World War Two) and

A REMINDER!!

It is now time to renew your membership in the HISTORICAL SOCIETY. Dues are \$10 for each calendar year or Life Membership is \$100. We enclose an envelope for your dues and a return envelope for your convenience in sending your dues to our treasurer. New members who join now will have the advantage of membership for the balance of 1981 plus the full year of 1982. Support the projects of your Historical Society by joining now or renewing your membership now for the year of 1982.

who has followed the program through the intervening years it appeared that in Honolulu new ground was broken. The people of the Pacific Churches were the focus of this dramatic experience and the heart of the message was to be seen in the strength of leadership and the potential for growth in these mainly island churches. It was the revelation of this hitherto unperceived potential that transformed the conference and prevented it from reverting to a mere repetition of the all too familiar resolutions and pronouncements so characteristic of almost every large meeting of the main-line denominations of the west during the past decade. In addition, the vital participation of the Pacific Churches helped to make the conference theme "Gathered Into One" an exciting reality.

The conference was opened by an impressive and worshipful Communion service with twenty altars ringing the room, presided over by clergy from every corner of the earth. Twenty hand carved black walnut chalices from a Kentucky tree and loaves of home-baked bread were on each altar. The high altar was covered with a Tapa cloth from Tonga and a quilted banner of early Hawaiian missionary symbols was hung as a dossal cloth behind the altar. The procession of flags from the 90 participating nations left no doubt as to the scope and inclusiveness of the "Church Gathered." The sermon by Dr. Kenneth Greet from Great Britain, the retiring president of the Council, set a clear tone for the session. He reminded us that to be truly effective Christians we must be gathered into oneness of spirit and purpose. This "oneness" referred to so often in the New Testament, far transcends the necessity for organic unity in the propagation of the Gospel of Christ. Dr. Greet was the first of many outstanding speakers who challenged the thinking and lifted the spirits of the delegates and gave a continuing thread of meaning to the program.

The week's program included excellent reports from the Executive Secretary Dr. Joe Hale, from the Joint Commission between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Methodist Council and another from a similar Commission with the Lutheran World Federation. Significant progress is being made toward better understanding and meaningful cooperation with both of these groups. The United Bible Society reported that last year four million copies of scripture were distributed around the world.

The Council's "Peace Award", for 1980, was given to the Rev. Able Hendricks of South Africa, a colored minister and to Lord Soper of Great Britain for the year 1981. The criteria for the award are courage, creativity and consistency for purpose.

Afternoon sessions were divided into small interest groups on subjects ranging over a wide area from ecumenism to intercessory prayer. These were led by professionals in the specific fields but the process was enlivened by contributions from individuals varying widely in the points of view.

The Sunday morning worship service was memorable. The local church members, who had entertained us royally with ethnic tribal songs and dances at the Friday night banquet, led us in a deeply moving experience of liturgy and music. Bishop Jack M. Tuell, presiding Bishop in Hawaii for the United Methodist Church, opened our minds and confirmed our faith

in the basic tenets of discipleship. Recognizing our commitment, in that we are "Under Orders", he reminded us that a Christian must "Go... Teach"; seeking new disciples and validating our faith by the quality of our lives.

The "Waikiki Walk", a procession of delegates over a mile long down the main street of Honolulu from the Sheraton to the "Shell" was a fitting climax to the Conference. It was an enthusiastic demonstration which caught the attention of the city. Balconies and sidewalks were lined with applauding people drawn by the joyful singing of hymns and the colorful flags and banners scattered throughout the line of march. At the "Shell" the Hawaiian District Pan-Pacific choir of 160 voices and a choir of fifty children provided the musical setting for the inspiring sermon by the world evangelist, Dr. Alan Walker of Australia. It was his stirring challenge to effective discipleship that sent the delegates out as the "Church scattered" to spread the Gospel throughout the world.

The statistics of the conference were impressive. 49 million church members of 63 Wesleyan church bodies from 90 countries were represented by the 3500 delegates gathered in Hawaii. The multilingual nature of the gathering caught our attention as we repeated "The Lord's Prayer" or sang familiar hymns. The list was long--one could hear Estonian, Korean, Tongan, Japanese and many other unknown tongues as well as the more familiar western languages. Thus the theme "Gathered into One" was again accentuated.

We of the Wesleyan heritage are indebted to an emerging leadership which is building a creative program on the foundations of the past and projecting those values into the second century of the World Methodist Council, beginning with the concept "A Mission to the 80's".

As Bishop William R. Cannon, the newly installed President of the Council spoke at the concluding session we recalled the words of Dr. Greet at our first session: "If God has the power to bring change into my life, there is nothing in the wide world He cannot do". Thus the past and the future were tied together and we left the Conference with a deep sense of spiritual rededication and gratitude for the Wesleyan tie that binds us, however loosely, into one.

The Rev. H. Alden Welch, Pastor, First United Methodist Church, Newton, NJ

The 14th World Methodist Conference was held in Honolulu, Hawaii, July 21-28. More than 3,400 Methodists from 63 churches in over 90 countries joined together for worship, fellowship, discussion, and, to the extent that it is possible, to speak with one voice a common Methodist witness to the world. Since many of the mission or central conferences have chosen to become autonomous churches, these quinquennial conferences have increased in importance. World Methodist Conferences have no legislative powers. However, they provide the only opportunity for representatives from all of the major churches in the Wesleyan tradition from all over the world to meet together.

Attending from the New Jersey Area were the Council members from our

Area and the following Delegates nominated by Bishop White: D. Robert W. Crowther, Jr., Rev. John S. Dubois, Rev. Champion B. Goldy, Dr. Frank B. Stanger, Rev. David J. Bort, and Dr. John R. McLaughlin. Also attending as Authorized Visitors or Observers were: Mrs. White, Mrs. Crowther, Mrs. Dubois, Mrs. Goldy, Mr. & Mrs. William McElwee, Rev. & Mrs. Horace Franz, Mrs. Sayre, Rev. & Mrs. Harry Teat, Mrs. Stanger, Mrs. Bort, Mrs. McLaughlin, Ms. Florence Buckingham, Ms. Doris Torregrosso, and Mr. & Mrs. Ward Emery. Council members, delegates, and others attending from our Area were responsible for meeting their own expenses. Some received partial support from local church or other sources.

"Gathered Into One" was the stated theme, experienced reality, and expressed hope of the 14th World Methodist Conference. The phrase was taken from a line by Charles Wesley: "He bids us build each other up; and, gathered into one, to our high calling's glorious hope, we hand in hand go on." The Conference was keynoted by Dr. Kenneth G. Greet, President of British Methodism and Chairman of the Conference. He noted that while those in attendance live on the same planet and come from a common Wesleyan tradition, there are differences of language, lifestyle, and culture, and more importantly, of circumstance and prospect. But calling attention to Ephesians 2:14-"He is our peace, who makes us one"- he affirmed that Jesus Christ can make us one and that allegiance to him is the hope of the world.

The theme of the Conference was developed in a series of major addresses. The first entitled "One World" was given by Leticia Shahani, Assistant General Secretary of the United Nations and a Methodist from the Philippines. She described the stark poverty in which most of the world's people live with 80% having less than \$400 a year per capita to live on. "This poses a greater threat to world peace," she said, "than the arms race. The poverty line that separates the 'have-not' nations of the South from the 'have' nations of the North is the fault-line that threatens the stability of the world."

In his address entitled "One Mission," Dr. Jose Miguez-Bonino of Argentina, went on to declare that there can be no world peace or Christian unity without economic justice. "The mission of the church is to proclaim and to enact God's love." We need to proclaim Christ to the world and validate that claim of hope by identifying with the aspirations of the poor. The resolutions adopted by the Conference (see accompanying article) pointed to a willingness on the part of Methodists to do this.

During the Conference, Dr. Able Hendricks of South Africa was presented the World Methodist Peace Award. Dr. Hendricks, twice president of the Methodist Church in Southern Africa, pioneered in establishing a mission work on the Cape Flats near Cape Town where black South Africans were placed by the thousands under the nation's policy of apartheid. The mission now includes five congregations with more than 2,000 members. An outspoken opponent of apartheid, on one occasion he was arrested for conducting a prayer meeting in the face of bulldozers about to destroy a section of the area's meager housing.

The Conference ended with a great outdoor rally at which Dr. Alan Walker

of Sydney, Australia, a renown Methodist evangelist, sent the delegates back to the countries from which they had come to work for peace and justice and to witness for Christ. He challenged them saying, "Humanity cannot rest until poverty, racism, violence, and war are swept away." He declared that he senses a great worldwide Christian awakening. "Open your eyes! See what God is doing. We are seeing one of those great shifts of influence and power in which England, Europe, and even the mighty United States are in Christian terms shrinking in influence and Asia, the Pacific, Latin America, and Africa with the great multiplication of Christians and the great vitality and joy of the Gospel coming to where the power is converging in them. God is creating his new Christendom--a new community of people which I sincerely believe is our only hope."

Mrs. Edna Emery, Boonton, NJ, Laymember of the annual conference

The silver Jubilee Assembly of the World Federation of Methodist Women was held in Honolulu, Hawaii, July 15-21, presided over by President Elizabeth Kissack of the Isle of Man, U.K. About 450 women (and some men) came together for inspiration and information on the theme, "New Dimensions".

In her keynote address, Dame Nita Barrow, worldwide president of the Young Women's Christian Association and retired director of the Christian Medical Commission of the World Council of Churches, called on women around the world to think of human rights, energy and the environment, refugees, peace and health as women's issues. She asserted that women from all nations must understand their mutual interdependence and responsibility to each other.

Violence was denounced by Beatriz Melano Couch, professor of theology, Union Theological Seminary, Buenos Aires, Argentina, in a three-part study series, "The New Quality of Life." She asked participants if they were willing to follow Christ's mandate to change the quality of life--individually, communally, nationally-- even if this effort takes them to the cross.

Other addresses included similar challenges. Also, participants themselves, meeting in discussion groups around the areas of refugees, health, peace, and family life, made some recommendations which included: an emphasis on the plight of refugees, including educational and advocacy programs; development of training programs in food preparation and production, nutrition and health care, with a special priority to the problems of African women; the advocacy of peace at every opportunity, asking women to pray for peace at 7 a.m. each morning; an expression of concern over the support of dictatorships by all governments and particularly by the United States; a series of proposals to strengthen family life, dealing with preparation for family life, the changing role of women, instability in the home, child abuse, and drug abuse and alcohol.

Officers for the next quinquennium are: president, Oknah Kim Lah of South Korea; vice-president, Priscilla Peters of Pakistan; secretary, Vera Dowie of New Zealand; treasurer, Edith M. Loane of Ireland, and editor of Newsletter, Jackie Darr of Mississippi.

LOCAL CHURCH HISTORY CONTEST- Awards to be presented during 1982 Conference

Several local churches have submitted histories of their churches published during the calendar year 1981 for our ninth annual LOCAL CHURCH HISTORY RECOGNITION CONTEST. Two awards will be presented during the June 1982 meeting of the Annual Conference.

If your church has published a history of your local church in 1981, we urge your to enter it in the contest now. Large or small, pamphlet or cloth bound, mimeographed or printed--all histories published during 1981 are eligible. Each history will become part of the Conference's permanent collection.

MAIL ONE COPY TO : Dr. Kenneth E. Rowe, Drew University Library, Madison, NJ 07940 by February 1, 1982

ANNUAL DINNER MEETING OF HISTORICAL SOCIETY Tuesday May 18 1982

Speak: Professor Russell Richey, Drew University. Mark the date on your calendar now and plan to attend. Full details in Spring issue.

A BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR OUR CONFERENCE

Planning is well under way to celebrate our conference's 125 birthday in 1982. Principal speakers at the 1982 session of the annual conference will be the several Bishops of our church who are sons of the conference. Highlight of the meeting will be an historical pageant celebrating our heritage on Monday night. Also at the conference the Historical Society plans to unveil a new 125-page 125th ANNIVERSARY HISTORY which will contain several essays chronicling changes in the past 25 years along with a 50-word historical statement from each local church in the conference.

The Commission on Archives and History has an ongoing project to record a sermon and a historical/biographical statement from every member of our Annual Conference. In the beginning we requested that this cassette/tape be made upon retirement. We now suggest that this cassette can be made at any time and then filed in the Annual Conference Archives, just so we get the recorded voice of every member of the conference. All members of the Conference are requested to record a sermon on one side of the cassette and a historical/biographical statement about their ministry, personal observations, churches served with comments or any other matters that would be of historical or biographical interest. If you do not have a cassette recorder, the Commission has a recorder that we shall be pleased to lend you. If you do not have a cassette available, the Commission will be happy to supply one for this purpose. If those of you who are retired have not made your recording as yet, please do so at your earliest convenience. You may mail them or deliver them to Dr. Kenneth E. Rowe and he will put them in
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